Feet of Fury(tm) Preview/Beta Manual

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Overview

Feet of Fury is still in development, but hopefully this preview/beta version will help tide over all you homebrew enthusiasts for a while

This user manual is an updated version of what was sent with our entry to the Independent Games Festival. It should provide all the necessary instructions to play the game and point out any areas that are still under construction.

What is *Feet of Fury?*

Feet of Fury is the culmination of many months worth of hard work by the Cryptic Allusion team. Like most homebrew and much indie software, all development thus far has proceeded in the spare time of the developers whenever we had a few minutes to spare, and with no budget. Despite these restraints, we're quite happy with the results thus far. We really hope you enjoy this demo/preview version. The final game release is currently scheduled for January of 2005.

Feet of Fury (FoF for short) is what we like to call an "action puzzle" game. These types of games generally involve a player-to-player aspect, some sort of puzzle solving, and time limits to worry about. Unlike some other "musical beat" games out there, FoF is focused much more on the player-vs-player aspect than trying to achieve a perfect score. Even when playing in 1-player mode, a computer AI is present as the second player.

We've worked to make it possible to just jump right in and play the game, but as usual, if you want to get the most out of the game you'll probably want to read through this manual.

The Story

Every good game has to have a background story, right?

The underground of the future revolves dance clubs like gladiatorial arenas where contestants fight each other with their dance steps in an arena – *Feet of Fury!*[1]

A mysterious and very black-box computer system controls this dance arena and coordinates the fight. The computer system can project what seems to be an extremely realistic holographic overlay on the arena so that they see and feel the things in the playing field (such as the arrows).

Each of the really good players additionally has some attack which they can seemingly launch using only their mental strength when they are really "in the zone" at their dance, and these have become the trademarks of the big stars over the years.

The competition is, for lack of a better word, furious, and over the years the top stars of the arena have started discovering what gives the arena computer its powers – tryptonite[1], a powerful crystal of unknown origin which, when energy is applied to it in a certain way, can warp reality around it in all sorts of interesting ways (for example, showing an arena with dance steps in it).

It is rumored that the top contestants each possess a piece of tryptonite themselves, and this is how they launch their mental attacks: it is also believed that these contestants travel around and battle each other in an attempt to obtain more tryptonite. No one really knows what their end goals may be.

Basic character backgrounds:

- Diseo and Sydney Velska are a brother/sister team which compete in *Feet of Fury* because they think it's fun and want to be the best in the whole world. Or so they say
- Kiwi is a creature who was transported from an RPG world by a freak spell casting accident. It was only after she arrived that she discovered her true passion – *Feet of Fury*.
- Pedro Villanueva aka "The Mambo King" has been vying for years to get his favorite kind of music onto *Feet of Fury* terms – mambo! Alas, it appears that he hasn't been successful at this particular arena yet.

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[1] Yes, the name tryptonite? You can see part of its dynamic and alien molecular structure in the background of the "About" screen

- Metal Junky is an intelligent and sentient robot creature that appeared on the *Feet of Fury* scene shortly after the initial arena control machine was deployed. No one knows his true origins or how he became so good at the game so quickly, but it is rumored that he is more than he seems.

- Charlotte Montabello is a ghost who haunted the clubs for years. She finally came out of hiding and decided to participate in some fun in person when *Feet of Fury* was first released. She now terrorizes arenas across the world with her ethereal presence.

- Vengeance is an evident fish creature which crawled up out of the sea to avenge his fellow creatures, which were destroyed by the Atlanteans 5000 years ago. He doesn't realize that modern humans aren't even the same race really, but that doesn't stop him from using a telekinetic powers to 'dance' with the best of them.

- Pico is a snowman who used to be a human, but a freak accident turned him into his current form. Rumor has it this was related to the rargued creation of the arena control machines used for the discovery of tryptoside, but no evidence has surfaced so far to support this idea.

- Sedary Curious is a dancing dragon who appeared on the *Feet of Fury* scene a few years back. He is rumored to have been sucked from the same fantasy world as Kiwi, but no one really knows much about his background except that he is a total dancing machine.

How do I get started?

So you've got this game downloaded and now you want to play it, eh?

The *Feet of Fury* distribution comes in a number of different formats, including a set of raw files which you can burn to a CDR using mkisofs/cdrecord. Which option you choose will probably depend mostly on how much you understand about burning DC home-brew games and what works with your CD burner.

If you choose the mkisofs/cdrecord route, then please use the included IP.BIN file. It has had all of the proprietary code removed (thanks Jacob) except what the console absolutely requires to autogenerate with its boot process. It also includes a new burner that disclaims the licensing statement on the boot screen. Note here also that the 1st_read.bin is pre-scrambled. These are the options I used with mkisofs, you'll want to use something like it to ensure that it works:

    mkisofs -C 0,11702 -G IP.BIN -l -r -o fof.iso

Feet of Fury requires a Dreamcast(tm)[2] console which is capable of booting and playing MIL-CD formatted CDs (such as Bleem!). This should basically be all DCs, not including the last few Japanese versions. It will function on a Euro/PAL DC as well, but the output will be NTSC. It is designed to work equally well with a controller or dance floor mat. Output looks best with a VGA Adapter, but it will work just fine on a standard television output as well.

Overview of Game Play

Most parts of the game may be escaped to return to the main menu by holding down the B button and pressing START. Demo mode, which will be entered if any menu is idle for a certain period of time, may be exited by pressing START.

To begin game play, hit START from the title screen, then select "Battle Mode" from the main menu on the A button. You will be presented with a character selection screen. If a second controller is present, then a "P2 PRESS START" banner will appear above the second player slot to allow another player to join. Otherwise, the computer AI will play this slot.

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[2] "Dreamcast" is a trademark of Sega Enterprises.

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After selecting a character, you will be presented with an option for "Auto" or "Manual" attack modes. The meaning of this option will become more apparent after playing a few rounds, but it basically lets you have the game automatically launch paired up attacks for you, or lets you rush and launch them at the time you desire (respectively).

You will then fight a battle with the win going to the winner of 2 out of 3 rounds of game play. Before each round, you will select a song by pressing the D-PAD Left and Right, selecting a difficulty rating with the D-PAD Up and Down, and pressing A when finished. In 2-player mode, both players must confirm their selections before game play begins.

Choose your difficulty carefully: it not only determines which set of arrows you will have to play during the round, but also various internal settings for difficulty. For example, taunt status effects will last longer if you are playing on a higher difficulty setting.

Basic gameplay in *Feet of Fury* consists of reading the arrow patterns generated by the song, pressing the corresponding button combinations when the arrow pattern reaches the gray arrows at the top of the player display. In "JoyPad" mode, both the D-PAD and the A/B/X/Y buttons may be used for this purpose, which is especially helpful when a double arrow is presented. X corresponds to D-PAD Up, Y corresponds to D-PAD Up, B corresponds to D-PAD Right, and A corresponds to D-PAD Down. For example, if an arrow pattern has a left and right facing arrow, when it scrolls to the top of the screen and lines up with the gray background arrows, the user would press the D-PAD Left and B, or D-PAD Right and X.

Additionally, various items may be obtained by successfully hitting a dazzling, silver arrow. The item received on the arrow will then be placed in the user's item inventory. These items include several offensive attacks which may confuse and hinder the opponent (arrow bomb, drunken arrows, vortex, tornado, dancing arrows, fireball, reverse) and defensive attacks which will help the player (caffeine, reprieve, dispel). A detailed description of each item will be provided below.

Once the player has obtained an item, he or she may launch it by pressing the right trigger button on the controller in "JoyPad" mode, or by pressing any of A, B, X, or Y an "Float Mat" mode. Offensive items will be launched against the opponent, and defensive items will be launched against the player unless a "reverse" attack is in place (see below). Note that as mentioned above, launching an attack is not necessary if the user's selected "Auto" attack mode - it will automatically launched as soon as it is picked up

Each time the player successfully hits an arrow, their health meter will increase slightly; missing an arrow or hitting it with bad timing will decrease their health meter quite a bit. Arrows which contain items you can pick up do not need to be hit to maintain your health or furiosity meter (i.e., hitting item arrows is not required).

By default whichever player has the highest health meter at the end of the round wins that round, and a star is placed in their victory slot above the health meter. If the players have equal health, then their furiosity spectrometers (see below) are compared. If there are also equal, then the round is declared a draw and a fought game.

The "furiosity spectrometer" located between the two player fields measures how many arrows have been well hit in a row. When this meter reaches maximum and begins to flash, the player may launch an attack without using an item, as if an item has been picked up. This attack is music to the character selected before the round, the character associated with each attack is listed below.

You may also select (from the Options menu) whether the end of the round will be declared when one player reaches zero health, or at the end of the song. The default is to end at the end of the song.

Below is a summary of all of the available music/mute attacks:

- **Arrow Bomb** Represented by a bomb icon. This is an offensive attack which will replace a burst of arrows or of blank space on the opponent's arrow field with a pattern of green arrows. This is the mute attack of Vengeance.

- **Drunken Arrows** Represented by a yellow frown face with X eyes. This is an offensive attack which causes the opponent's arrows to wave back and forth for a fixed period of time. This is the mute attack of Dawon Veldan.

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- **Vortex.** Represented by a black and white swirl icon. This is an offensive attack which causes the opponent's arrows to rotate around in place as they move up the screen. This is the innate attack of Kiwi.

- **Turbo.** Represented by an icon of several red arrows. This is an offensive attack which causes the opponent's arrows to move at three times their normal speed and spacing. The effect is that fewer arrows are visible on the screen at once, and timing is more difficult. This is the innate attack of Metal Junky.

- **Phasing Arrows.** Represented by an icon of a blue swirl over a cross pattern. This is an offensive attack which causes the opponent's arrows to "phase" in and out as they head towards the top. All arrows must still be hit, they are just not always visible. This is the innate attack of Pedro Villanueva.

- **Fireball.** Represented by small flame. This is an offensive attack which depresses the opponent's health meter directly. This is the innate attack of Charlotte Montabelle.

- **Reverse.** Represented by a set of red/green arrows pointing in opposite directions. When you launch a Reverse attack, a set of rotating red/green arrows will appear over the opponent's playing field. During this time, any attack which the opponent performs will apply to you, not to themselves. The one exception to this rule is Dispel, which will remove a Reverse attack.

- **Caffeine.** Represented by a bubbling potion icon. This is a defensive item which increases the player's health by a small amount. This is the innate attack of Sydney Veldan.

- **Reprieve.** Represented by an eraser icon. This is a defensive item which removes all arrows from the player's field except every other quarter note for the next few bars of music. This is the innate attack of Pico.

- **Dispel.** Represented by a magus wand with a blue circle/slash over it. This is a defensive item which will remove any outstanding status condition on yourself, such as Phasing Arrows or Reverse. This is the innate attack of Seduey Corbian.

Swap CDs

Swap CDs are the mechanism by which we allow you to play your own songs on *Feet of Fury*. The basic idea is that you make a CD image with a certain structure and certain files, and FoF will use it for its song selection menu instead of the internal songs.

To use a Swap CD, select the SwapCD Battle option from the main menu. You will then be presented with the Swap CD menu. Insert the CD tray, remove the *Feet of Fury* CD, insert the Swap CD, and close the tray[3].

Assuming the Swap CD is properly formatted, the list of sets on the CD will be loaded and thumbnails displayed for them. You can then select a song set with A and the game will proceed as normal.

If you exit the game from Swap CD mode to return to the main menu, it will prompt you to re-insert the *Feet of Fury* CD.

The Swap CD system is probably the least reliable part of *Feet of Fury* simply because it introduces new data to the game which we haven't been able to QA and test with. So *caveat emptor*! If something goes wrong while using a Swap CD, don't blame us :-)

We hope to have it more robust and error tolerant by the finished version, of course

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[3]Note, do not open the CD tray at any other time, or *Feet of Fury* will boot you back to the bios menu like a proper DC game.

Options

The options range from very obvious (volume) to arcane (control type). Here is a quick explanation of each setting.

- **Control Type.** *Feet of Fury* was originally designed for play with the standard hand-held controllers. However, we recognize that you may want to play with floor mats and with how the ability to use manual attack mode. To assist with this, we've included the control type settings. Selecting "JoyPad" mode will set both the D-Pad and the A/B/X/Y buttons to be directional arrows, and the right trigger to launch manual attacks. "Floor Mat" mode may be used when there is no right trigger present (for example using a PSX converter). This sets the D-Pad to be directional arrows, and A/B/X/Y to launch attacks

- **Volume.** Fairly obvious stuff.

- **Announcer.** Setting this to "Off" will disable all announcer voices except the title screen's pronouncement of the game's name. It's ok, Roddy won't get his feelings too hurt if you don't want to hear him announce. ;) [4]

- **Mono/Stereo.** We still don't know exactly where in the flash ROM they store this setting, so you can set it there if you need mono output for an old TV or something.

- **AI Skill.** This simply affects the accuracy with which the AI computer player will hit its arrows. For math geeks, this moves a bias point in a Gaussian distribution that determines accuracy. "Wimpy" is about 80%, "Ludicrous" is about 95%.

- **End of Round.** If you set this to "End of Song", then the round will end only when the song is finished. A winner will be determined by the relative health and furiosity meters. If you set it to "Out of Health", then the round will be over as soon as one player has zero health.

- **Attack Length.** This determines the duration of any timed status effects (e.g. Vortex, Flaming Arrows, Reverse). Not all attacks have the same duration, to balance out the game play, but "Short" is about 3 seconds while "Ludicrous" is about 10 seconds

- **Save to VMU.** This will save your options to the first VMU it finds (it starts at port A1, then A2, then B1, then B2, etc). You need at least 4 blocks free to save your options. Note that while the VMU driver seems fairly stable (and is used by other KOS programs), we recommend you keep your saves on a card with other homebrew games for the moment until we've done more verification on the driver. We'd hate for you to lose your 99-level PSO because we don't fully trust our VMU routines yet.

About Screen

The screen shot on the mass menu of the about screen seems to have more to it than you see by default on the about screen itself. I wonder what happened there? (*wink wink, nudge nudge, say no more, say no more!*)

Conclusion

We hope you enjoy *Feet of Fury* and all the hard work we've put into it so far. Look for the final release of the game in a few months at the start of 2003!

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[4] Actually, Roddy's the one who repeated this option.

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